BEFORE THE MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA

)))
) Case No. 8002016022279
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DECISION

The attached Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on AUGUST 10, 2017.

IT IS SO ORDERED AUGUST 3, 2017

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

Kimberly Kirchmeyer

Executive Director

1 2 3 4 5 6 7	XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California JUDITH T. ALVARADO Supervising Deputy Attorney General NICHOLAS B.C. SCHULTZ Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 302151 California Department of Justice 300 South Spring Street, Suite 1702 Los Angeles, California 90013 Telephone: (213) 897-6564 Facsimile: (213) 897-9395 Attorneys for Complainant	· ·	
8 9	BEFORE THE MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
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1.1.	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 800-2016-022279	
12	CLAUDE R. CAHEN, M.D. 2722 Montana Avenue	OAH No. 2017030995	
13	Santa Monica, California 90403	STIPULATED SURRENDER OF	
14	Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 43907,	LICENSE AND ORDER	
15			
16	Respondent.		
17	IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGI	REED by and between the parties to the above-	
18			
19	PARTIES		
20	1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) is the Executive Director of the Medical Board		
21	of California, Department of Consumer Affairs (Board). She brought this action solely in her		
22	official capacity and is represented in this matter by Xavier Becerra, Attorney General of the		
23	State of California, by Nicholas B.C. Schultz, Deputy Attorney General.		
24	2. Claude R. Cahen, M.D. (Respondent) is represented in this proceeding by attorney	
25	Michael J. Khouri, whose address is: Khouri Law Firm, 24012 Calle De La Plata, Suite 210,		
26	Laguna Hills, California 92653.		
27	3. On or about August 10, 1987, the Bo	ard issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate	
28	No. A 43907 to Respondent. The Physician's an	d Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and	
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effect at all times relevant to the charges brought in Accusation No. 800-2016-022279, and it will expire on December 31, 2018, unless renewed.

JURISDICTION

4. Accusation No. 800-2016-022279 was filed before the Medical Board of California and is currently pending against Respondent. The Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent on February 2, 2017. Respondent timely filed his Notice of Defense contesting the Accusation. A copy of Accusation No. 800-2016-022279 is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

- 5. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 800-2016-022279. Respondent also has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order.
- 6. Respondent is fully aware of his legal rights in this matter including: the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in the Accusation; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against him; the right to present evidence and to testify on his own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.
- 7. Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and every right set forth above.

CULPABILITY

- 8. Respondent admits the truth of each and every charge and allegation in Accusation No. 800-2016-022279, and he agrees that cause exists for discipline and hereby surrenders his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 43907 for the Board's formal acceptance.
- 9. Respondent understands that by signing this Stipulated Surrender of License he enables the Board to issue an order accepting the surrender of his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate without further process.

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RESERVATION

10. The admissions made by Respondent herein are only for the purposes of this proceeding, or any other proceedings in which the Medical Board of California or other professional licensing agency is involved, and shall not be admissible in any other criminal or civil proceeding.

CONTINGENCY

- 11. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Board. Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Board may communicate directly with the Board regarding this stipulation and surrender, without notice to or participation by Respondent or his counsel. By signing the stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that he may not withdraw his agreement or seek to rescind the stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails to adopt this stipulation as its Decision and Order, then the Stipulated Surrender and Disciplinary Order shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having considered this matter.
- 12. The parties understand and agree that Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile copies of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order, including Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.
- 13. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following Order:

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 43907 issued to Respondent is surrendered and accepted by the Medical Board of California.

1. The surrender of Respondent's Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 43907 and the acceptance of the surrendered license by the Board shall constitute the imposition of discipline against Respondent. This stipulation constitutes a record of the discipline and shall become a part of Respondent's license history with the Medical Board of California.

- 2. Respondent shall lose all rights and privileges as a physician and surgeon in the State of California as of the effective date of the Board's Decision and Order.
- 3. Respondent shall cause to be delivered to the Board his pocket license and, if one was issued, his wall certificate on or before the effective date of the Decision and Order.
- 4. If Respondent ever files an application for licensure or a petition for reinstatement in the State of California, then the Board shall treat it as a petition for reinstatement. Respondent must comply with all the laws, regulations and procedures for reinstatement of a revoked license in effect at the time the petition is filed, and all of the charges and allegations contained in Accusation No. 800-2016-022279 shall be deemed to be true, correct and admitted by Respondent when the Board determines whether to grant or deny the petition.
- 5. If Respondent should ever apply or reapply for a new license or certification, or petition for reinstatement of a license, by any other health care licensing agency in the State of California, then all of the charges and allegations contained in Accusation, No. 800-2016-022279 shall be deemed to be true, correct, and admitted by Respondent for the purpose of any Statement of Issues or any other proceeding seeking to deny or restrict licensure.

ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Surrender of License and Order and I have fully discussed it with my attorney, Michael J. Khouri, Esq. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate. I enter into this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and I agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED:	6/19/2017	- Claude R. Cahuran
		CLAUDE R. CAHEN, M.D. Respondent
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1	I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Claude R. Cahen, M.D. the terms and		
2	conditions and other matters contained in this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order. I		
3	approve its form and content:		
4	The state of the s		
5	DATED: June 22, 2017 Williams		
6	MICHAFL J. KHOURI, ESQ. Attorney for Respondent		
7			
8	ENDORSEMENT		
9	The foregoing Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is hereby respectfully submitted		
10	for consideration by the Medical Board of California of the Department of Consumer Affairs.		
11	Dated: Jone 23, 2017 Respectfully submitted,		
12	XAVIER BECERRA		
13	Attorney General of California JUDITH T. ALVARADO		
14	Supervising Deputy Attorney General		
15	What A		
16	NICHOLAS B.C. SCHULTZ Deputy Attorney General		
17	Attorneys for Complainant		
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Exhibit A

Accusation No. 800-2016-022279

1 2	KATHLEEN A. KENEALY Acting Attorney General of California JUDITH T. ALVARADO Supervising Deputy Attorney General			
3	NICHOLAS B.C. SCHULTZ			
4	State Bar No. 302151 ANALYST			
5	California Department of Justice 300 South Spring Street, Suite 1702			
6	Los Angeles, California 90013 Telephone: (213) 897-6564 Facsimile: (213) 897-9395			
7	Attorneys for Complainant			
8	BEFORE THE			
9	MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA			
10	STATE OF CALIFORNIA			
11.	In the Matter of the Accusation Against: Case No. 800-2016-022279			
12	CLAUDE R. CAHEN, M.D. 2722 Montana Avenue ACCUSATION			
13	Santa Monica, California 90403			
14	Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 43907,			
15	Respondent.			
16				
17				
18	Complainant alleges:			
19	<u>PARTIES</u>			
20	1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in her official			
21	capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer			
22	Affairs (Board).			
23	2. On or about August 10, 1987, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's			
24	Certificate Number A 43907 to Claude R. Cahen, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and			
25	Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought			
26	herein and will expire on December 31, 2018, unless renewed.			
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JURISDICTION

- 3. This Accusation is brought before the Board under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.
 - 4. Section 2227 of the Code states:
- "(a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of the Medical Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government Code, or whose default has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered into a stipulation for disciplinary action with the board, may, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter:
 - "(1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.
- "(2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one year upon order of the board.
- "(3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation monitoring upon order of the board.
- "(4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a requirement that the licensee complete relevant educational courses approved by the board.
- "(5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of probation, as the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.
- "(b) Any matter heard pursuant to subdivision (a), except for warning letters, medical review or advisory conferences, professional competency examinations, continuing education activities, and cost reimbursement associated therewith that are agreed to with the board and successfully completed by the licensee, or other matters made confidential or privileged by existing law, is deemed public, and shall be made available to the public by the board pursuant to Section 803.1."
 - 5. Section 2234 of the Code, states:

"The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

"(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter.

",,,,

"(e) The commission of any act involving dishonesty or corruption which is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

"..."

- 6. Section 2236 of the Code states:
- "(a) The conviction of any offense substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon constitutes unprofessional conduct within the meaning of this chapter [Chapter 5, the Medical Practice Act]. The record of conviction shall be conclusive evidence only of the fact that the conviction occurred.
- "(b) The district attorney, city attorney, or other prosecuting agency shall notify the Division of Medical Quality¹ of the pendency of an action against a licensee charging a felony or misdemeanor immediately upon obtaining information that the defendant is a licensee. The notice shall identify the licensee and describe the crimes charged and the facts alleged. The prosecuting agency shall also notify the clerk of the court in which the action is pending that the defendant is a licensee, and the clerk shall record prominently in the file that the defendant holds a license as a physician and surgeon.
- "(c) The clerk of the court in which a licensee is convicted of a crime shall, within 48 hours after the conviction, transmit a certified copy of the record of conviction to the board. The division may inquire into the circumstances surrounding the commission of a crime in order to fix the degree of discipline or to determine if the conviction is of an offense substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

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¹ California Business and Professions Code Section 2002, as amended and effective January 1, 2008, provides that, unless otherwise expressly provided, the term "board" as used in the State Medical Practice Act (Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§§§ 2000, et seq.) means the "Medical Board of California" and references to the "Division of Medical Quality" and "Division of Licensing" in the Act or any other provision of law shall be deemed to refer to the Board.

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"(d) A plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction after a plea of nolo contendere is deemed to be a conviction within the meaning of this section and Section 2236.1. The record of conviction shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that the conviction occurred,"

7. Section 490 of the Code states:

- "(a) In addition to any other action that a board is permitted to take against a licensee, a board may suspend or revoke a license on the ground that the licensee has been convicted of a crime, if the crime is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of the business or profession for which the license was issued.
- "(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a board may exercise any authority to discipline a licensee for conviction of a crime that is independent of the authority granted under subdivision (a) only if the crime is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of the business or profession for which the licensee's license was issued.
- "(c) A conviction within the meaning of this section means a plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction following a plea of nolo contendere. Any action that a board is permitted to take following the establishment of a conviction may be taken when the time for appeal has elapsed, or the judgment of conviction has been affirmed on appeal, or when an order granting probation is made suspending the imposition of sentence, irrespective of a subsequent order under the provisions of Section 1203.4 of the Penal Code.
- "(d) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the application of this section has been made unclear by the holding in *Petropoulos* v. *Department of Real Estate* (2006) 142 Cal.App.4th 554, and that the holding in that case has placed a significant number of statutes and regulations in question, resulting in potential harm to the consumers of California from licensees who have been convicted of crimes. Therefore, the Legislature finds and declares that this section establishes an independent basis for a board to impose discipline upon a licensee, and that the amendments to this section made by Chapter 33 of the Statutes of 2008 do not constitute a change to, but rather are declaratory of, existing law."

8. Section 493 of the Code states:

"Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in a proceeding conducted by a board within the department pursuant to law to deny an application for a license or to suspend or revoke a license or otherwise take disciplinary action against a person who holds a license, upon the ground that the applicant or the licensee has been convicted of a crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of the licensee in question, the record of conviction of the crime shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that the conviction occurred, but only of that fact, and the board may inquire into the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime in order to fix the degree of discipline or to determine if the conviction is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of the licensee in question.

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9. California Code of Regulations, title 16, Section 1360 states:

"For the purposes of denial, suspension or revocation of a license, certificate or permit pursuant to Division 1.5 (commencing with Section 475) of the code, a crime or act shall be considered to be substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of a person holding a license, certificate or permit under the Medical Practice Act if to a substantial degree it evidences present or potential unfitness of a person holding a license, certificate or permit to perform the functions authorized by the license, certificate or permit in a manner consistent with the public health, safety or welfare. Such crimes or acts shall include but not be limited to the following: Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, or assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of the Medical Practice Act."

UNITED STATES CODE SECTIONS

- 10. United States Code, title 18, Section 1347 states:
- "(a) Whoever knowingly and willfully executes, or attempts to execute, a scheme or artifice--
 - "(1) to defraud any health care benefit program; or
- "(2) to obtain, by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, any of the money or property owned by, or under the custody or control of, any health care benefit

program,

"in connection with the delivery of or payment for health care benefits, items, or services, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 10 years or both. If the violation results in serious bodily injury (as defined in section 1365 of this title), such person shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both; and if the violation results in death, such person shall be fined under this title, or imprisoned for any term of years or for life, or both.

- "(b) With respect to violations of this section, a person need not have actual knowledge of this section or specific intent to commit a violation of this section."
 - 11. United States Code, title 18, Section 1349 states:

"Any person who attempts or conspires to commit any offense under this chapter shall be subject to the same penalties as those prescribed for the offense, the commission of which was the object of the attempt or conspiracy."

FACTUAL SUMMARY

- 12. On June 16, 2014, in the case entitled the *United States of America v. Claude R. Cahen*, case number 2:14-cr-00178-PSG, in the United States District Court for the Central District of California, Respondent entered a plea of guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud, a felony, in violation of United States Code, title 18, Section 1349. Respondent's sentencing was initially continued to April 13, 2015, but later continued for an additional year.
- 13. Prior to sentencing, Respondent entered into and executed a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office wherein Respondent agreed to the factual basis described in paragraph 14 below. On March 28, 2016, Respondent was sentenced in this matter based on his guilty plea to violating United States Code, title 18, Section 1349. Consequently, Respondent was sentenced to the following:
- A. One year and one day in the custody of the federal Bureau of Prisons with an additional order that Respondent surrender himself to the Bureau of Prisons before 12:00 p.m. on July 1, 2016;
 - B. Three years of supervised release upon his release from imprisonment;
 - C. Payment of \$573,315.19 in restitution as a condition of supervised release;

- D. Payment of a \$100 special assessment to the United States as a condition of supervised release;
- E. A requirement that Respondent apply all monies received from income tax refunds to his outstanding court-ordered financial obligations as a condition of supervised release;
- F. A requirement that Respondent comply with rules and regulations of the United States Probation Office and General Orders 05-02 and 01-05 as a condition of supervised release;
- G. A requirement that Respondent cooperate in the collection of his DNA sample as a condition of supervised release;
- H. A requirement that Respondent not engage, as whole or partial owner, employee, or consultant, volunteer, or otherwise, in any business involving the billing of medical services without the express approval of the Probation Officer prior to engaging in such employment as a condition of supervised release; and
- I. A requirement that Respondent not be employed in any position that requires licensing and/or certification by any local, state, or federal agency without the prior written approval of the Probation Officer as a condition of supervised release.
 - 14. The circumstances leading to Respondent's criminal conviction are as follows:
- A. Between September 2008 and June 2009, Respondent worked as a licensed physician and served as the medical director of the Claude R. Cahen, M.D., Inc., Clinic located on Live Oak Avenue in Arcadia, California (the Arcadia Clinic). During this time, Respondent enrolled the Arcadia Clinic as a provider with Medicare,² a federal health care benefit program that provides reimbursement for medically necessary services to persons aged sixty-five years and older, as well as for certain disabled persons. Respondent signed a Medicare provider application enrolling the Arcadia Clinic as a Medicare provider in August 2008.
- B. As part of the Medicare enrollment process, Respondent certified to Medicare that the Arcadia Clinic would not submit false or fraudulent claims to Medicare or submit claims

² Medicare is administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, a federal agency under the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Individuals that qualify for Medicare benefits are referred to as "beneficiaries," whereas physicians and other health care providers that are reimbursed by Medicare are referred to as "providers."

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with "deliberate ignorance or reckless disregard for their truth or falsity." After approving the application, Medicare assigned a group provider number to the Arcadia Clinic. Shortly thereafter, Respondent, along with Dr. W.M. and Dr. R.W., started submitting claims to Medicare under the Arcadia Clinic's group provider number, indicating in all of the submitted claims that the services were provided at the Arcadia Clinic.

- C. Between September 2008 and June 2009, Respondent conspired with H.H. and others at the Arcadia Clinic to defraud the Medicare program by billing it for medically unnecessary diagnostic tests that were often never performed on the patients. Respondent joined the conspiracy with the knowledge of and intent of the conspiracy's goal of defrauding Medicare.
- D. Respondent never informed Medicare that the Arcadia Clinic was purportedly performing diagnostic testing despite a requirement that he do so as a Medicare provider. Respondent also failed to provide the names of technicians or locations at which the tests were ostensibly performed. Moreover, while associated with the Arcadia Clinic, Respondent did not: (1) see or perform services for any patients; (2) observe Dr. W.M or Dr. R.W. perform any services for any patients; (3) see or review any patient charts; (4) supervise any technicians; or (5) take any steps to verify that the diagnostic tests billed to Medicare under the Arcadia Clinic's group number were actually provided and medically necessary.

E. Respondent knew that H.H. and others affiliated with the Arcadia Clinic submitted false and fraudulent claims to Medicare for services allegedly provided to Medicare beneficiaries by the Arcadia Clinic. Respondent was not in the country between December 2008 and June 2009. However, Respondent knew that the Arcadia Clinic continued to submit claims to Medicare under the Arcadia Clinic's group provider number, including claims on which Respondent was listed as the rendering provider, and continued to be reimbursed by Medicare for those claims while Respondent was out of the country.

³ Medicare requires providers to submit a claim for reimbursement of services. Among other things, providers must submit the following to Medicare: the beneficiary's name; diagnosis; the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code for the service provided to the beneficiary; the date and location of the provided service; and the name and physician identification number of the provider who rendered service.

- F. Respondent also left with H.H. and other individuals associated with the Arcadia Clinic a number of pre-signed, blank checks drawn on the Citibank bank account that Respondent established for the Arcadia Clinic. Respondent was aware that H.H. and others associated with the Arcadia Clinic used those checks to pay large amounts of money to corporations including "IFA Group, Inc." and "UFA Group, Inc.," although Respondent was not aware of any services that those corporations provided to the clinic.
- G. In total, the Arcadia Clinic billed Medicare approximately \$1,189,520.00, primarily for diagnostic tests. Medicare paid the Arcadia Clinic approximately \$573,315.19 on those claims, which represents the loss incurred by Medicare.

FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Conviction of a Crime Substantially Related to the Practice of a Physician & Surgeon)

- 15. By reason of the facts set forth in paragraphs 13 and 14 above, Respondent's license is subject to disciplinary action under Section 2234, subdivision (a), Section 2236, subdivision (a), and Section 490 of the Code, as well as California Code of Regulations, title 16, Section 1360, in that Respondent has been convicted of a crime that is substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of a physician and surgeon.
- 16. Respondent's acts and/or omissions as set forth in paragraphs 13 and 14 above, whether proven individually, jointly, or in any combination thereof, constitute the conviction of a crime that is substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of a physician and surgeon pursuant to Section 2234, subdivision (a), Section 2236, subdivision (a), and Section 490 of the Code, as well as California Code of Regulations, title 16, Section 1360.

SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Dishonest or Corrupt Act Substantially Related to the Practice of a Physician & Surgeon)

17. By reason of the facts set forth in paragraphs 13 and 14 above, Respondent's license is subject to disciplinary action under Section 2234, subdivision (e) of the Code, as well as California Code of Regulations, title 16, Section 1360, in that Respondent has committed an act or acts involving dishonesty or corruption that are substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of a physician and surgeon.

1 PRAYER WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, 2 and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision: 3 Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number A 43907, 4 1. 5 issued to Claude R. Cahen, M.D.; Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Claude R. Cahen, M.D.'s authority to 2. 6 supervise physician assistants, pursuant to section 3527 of the Code; .7 Ordering Claude R. Cahen, M.D., if placed on probation, to pay the Board the costs 8 3. of probation monitoring; and 9 Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper. 10 4. 11 12 DATED: February 2. 13 Executive Director Medical Board of California 14 Department of Consumer Affairs State of California 15 Complainant LA2016503910 16 62216508.doc 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

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